

City of Somerville, Massachusetts
Job Creation and Retention Trust

Trustees

Thomas Bent
Vickie Choitz
Lisa Cook
Silvana Dinka
Thomas Galligani
Anika Van Eaton
Rand Wilson
Josh Grehan
Jesse Clingan

Minutes

Somerville Job Creation and Retention Trust
Tuesday, December 8th, 2020, at 6:00PM
Zoom Meeting

In attendance: Vickie Choitz, Anika Van Eaton, Thomas Bent, Rand Wilson, Thomas Galligani, Silvana Dinka, Lisa Cook, Jesse Clingan

Staff Present: Ben Sommer

Meeting commenced at 6:06pm.

Board members said goodbye to staff member Ben Sommer who will be leaving the City.

1. Approve November 10 meeting minutes
 - Motion to approve made by Tom Bent. Motion was seconded by Jesse Clingan
 - Motion was passed unanimously by roll-call vote
2. Updates
 - a. Thomas Galligani gave an update on the Workforce Development Coordinator position. The City would be posting both this new position and Ben Sommer's position at the same time.
 - b. Ben Sommer gave an update on the new business representative seat. The Appointments Advisory Committee would be meeting on Wednesday the 9th to interview the candidate. Ben was still hopeful that this candidate, should they be appointed, could join the JCRT's January meeting.
 - c. Ben Sommer gave an update on the existing member re-appointments. The economic development office was still working to get these appointments on the Mayor's desk.
 - d. Ben Sommer reminded the board that they would be electing officers at the January meeting. Members could nominate others or stand for positions themselves.
 - e. A sub-committee was formed to research worker-owned coops and make recommendations to the full board on how the JCRT could support coops. Jesse Clingan, Anika Van Eaton, and Rand Wilson volunteered to form this sub-committee.

- f. A late agenda item was added to schedule the first quarter of 2021 meetings. Placeholders were put in the calendar for January 12th, February 9, and March 9th.
- 3. State grant matching opportunity for Job Quality Training for Small Business
 - Ben Sommer described the current application proposal for the State's Urban Agenda grant.
 - Tom Bent asked to see the curriculum for the High Road Kitchen's program. He also asked how the City would choose participating restaurants.
 - Jesse Clingan described aspects of the City of Boston's program and their selection process. Ben Sommer said he would speak to Boston on Thursday and get more info.
 - Vicky suggested that the board vote today to authorize funding and vote again to release funds if the grant is awarded. The proposal and curriculum should be shown to the board prior to that vote.
- a. Vote to increase allocation from \$81,000 up to \$100,000 pending grant award.
 - Rand Wilson made a motion to approve. Jess Clingan seconded the motion.
 - The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.
- 4. Discussion on 2021 Investment Priorities
 - Budget review
 - Tom Bent mentioned several commercial development projects that are delayed, notably the 0-20 Inner Belt project and 1 McGrath Highway. Tom Galligani gave an update on the 101 South St. site as well as the D2 site, which should be underway in 2021. Tom Bent noted that lab buildings are still moving strongly.
 - The board reviewed the [2021 Investment Summary document](#).
 - Vicky Choitz suggested voting in January or February once the board reviews the summary document.
 - Lisa Cook mentioned the overabundance of free training available to teachers that are undersubscribed.
 - Lisa Cook noted that digital literacy training for students is currently a very time intensive 1-on-1 project, while in a virtual environment.
 - Tom Bent said that he wanted to see results on the Category 1 existing programs before voting to reallocate funding towards them.
 - Jesse Clingan asked if there was a pipeline between training programs and employers.
 - Vicky Choitz said that maybe in addition to an option to continue funding for existing programs, we should add an option in Category 2, new programs, for more industry specific and adult education programs, should we want to expand those offerings.
 - Tom Bent mentioned that the green building rehab idea was so broad and would want more research on which careers would be appropriate to create trainings for.
 - Lisa Cook said that launching new programs right now is very difficult and that program calendars have been pushed back to accommodate more digital literacy training. The board may not see the outcomes they expect from current funded programs due to the existing environment.
 - Lisa suggested we bring funders together to talk about outcomes early in the year. Tom Galligani said he would move this forward.

- a. Vote on ranked order of 2021 investment priorities
 - This vote will be taken up in subsequent meetings
- 5. Discussion on allocating funding to each priority
 - a. Vote to approve funding allocations for 2021 investments
 - This vote will be taken up in a subsequent meeting.
- 6. Adjournment
 - a. Board members went around the room and made notes of gratitude for the year.
 - b. Motion made to adjourn made by Tom Bent. The motion was seconded by Vickie Choitz.
 - The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote and the meeting was adjourned at 7:37pm.